

Menger Hotel
San Antonio, Texas

HABS No. Tex-35

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
District of Texas--3

Historic American Buildings Survey
Bartlett Cocke, District Officer
615 Maverick Bldg., San Antonio, Texas

MENGER HOTEL
San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

Owner: John R. Kampmann Estate
Date Erected: 1859
Architect: Unknown
Builder: W. A. Menger
Present Condition: Excellent
Number of Stories: Three
Materials of Construction: Limestone, Pine, Oak, Cypress,
Marble.
Other Existing Records: None
Additional Data:

The Menger Hotel was the first hotel of any importance to be established in Southwest Texas. It is located on Alamo Plaza just one hundred yards south of the famous Alamo. It retains the same name as when it was established in 1859 and has been in continuous operation for over sixty-eight years.

At the opening of the hotel, there were no other hotels west of the Colorado River. The opening was attended by a celebration which was long remembered. The stage lines soon found that travelers preferred to come to San Antonio rather than stop in smaller settlements with uncertain accommodations. Thus the opening of the Menger Hotel had a definite influence on the growth and popularity of San Antonio and Southwest Texas. The hotel was in operation eighteen years before the first railroad was built into San Antonio in 1877.

Although the bar room was the most popular of any in the city, no rowdyism was permitted. The Menger Hotel has always been operated as a first rate hotel. The bar room served as a general meeting place; there convivial spirits gathered to slake their thirsts, relate their experiences, exchange reminiscences, and transact business.

The hotel was operated from its opening until 1871 by W. A. Menger, and at his death in that year, it was taken over by his son, L. W. Menger, who continued its operation until 1881. At that time it was sold to J. H. Kampmann whose estate still owns the property.

The original part of the building was built of the materials salvaged from the wrecking of the old Menger Brewery which stood just to the rear of the hotel. The building is three story, classical in design, with iron railing balconies on the front. The plan is rectangular with an enclosed patio east of the front portion, and east of the patio lies an open rectangular courtyard. At one time a stable existed on Blum Street, east of the hotel, and between St. Joseph's and Bonham Streets, to accommodate the horses and carriages of the travelers.

Many famous personages have been accommodated within the spacious walls of this hotel. Among them have been Theodore Roosevelt, John J. Pershing, William Howard Taft, and Warren G. Harding.

Part of this data was taken from the files of the San Antonio Express, June 21st, 1927.

Author:

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APPROVED:

Bartlett Cooke
Bartlett Cooke, District Officer

DW 7/26/27

**ADDENDUM TO
MENGGER HOTEL**
Alamo Plaza
San Antonio
Bexar County
Texas

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